



MILITARY DIVISION, STATE OF IDAHO

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BOISE, IDAHO 83705-5004

DIRK KEMPTHORNE
GOVERNOR

January 27, 2006

THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
LAWRENCE F. LAFRENZ

The Honorable Larry E. Craig
United States Senate
520 Hart Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Craig:

Thank you for all your efforts on behalf of the Idaho National Guard. I know you are aware of a recent Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) proposal to remote the Terminal Radar Approach Control (TRACON) at Boise Air Terminal to Salt Lake International. I would like to voice the Idaho National Guard's strong objection to this proposal.

Aircrews from the Air and Army National Guard operate here on a daily basis and fly thousands of sorties each year. They are experienced at getting into and out of the airport traffic area. Controllers also gain a familiarity with an area and become extremely adept at controlling traffic within that area. The familiarity controllers have of our local area and their knowledge of our local weather phenomena allows them to provide expedited services that will not be feasible with a controller located in Salt Lake. I know of many occasions when their knowledge of the area and its weather patterns has resulted in the safe recovery of our guard airplanes and helicopters as well aircraft from Mountain Home AFB. I am also concerned that this proposed change may restrict our use of the short field approach and landing strip and that its use may be denied when other aircraft are operating on the main runways, significantly limiting our training opportunities. I am doubtful controllers located at Salt Lake will ever gain the familiarity that would allow them to provide the same exceptional service we currently enjoy.

Sir, of utmost concern to me is the margin of safety that will not be possible with a controller in Salt Lake. Whether the separation is between participating traffic and our C-130's operating on the short field, fire fighting aircraft operations or our helicopter operations, we enjoy a relationship with the TRACON that allows us to operate our military aircraft with civilian traffic simultaneously in a safe, expeditious environment. We cannot accept anything less.

Finally, thanks to your great efforts, Boise will complete a new control tower within the next few years. This great addition to the airport combined with the National Guard's efforts to relocate its munitions storage area will allow for a significant growth opportunity at the airport. Attracting major flying operations in the future will depend on the ability of those aircraft to smoothly transition into and out of the airport. To remote the TRACON to Salt Lake will in all likelihood slow down the traffic flow, thus increasing operating costs and making Boise a less attractive location in which to operate.

Thank you for your continued support of the National Guard and the Boise Air Terminal. If I can be of any further assistance, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Lafrenz", written over a circular stamp or seal.

LAWRENCE F. LAFRENZ
Major General
Commanding General